system. The criteria should be adopted through a public process and state and local efforts directed at the establishment of criteria for classification and gathering of necessary data to prepare maps to implement the system.

Comprehensive classification programs depend on adequate hydrogeo-logical information to be effective. Development of the Connecticut classification system was, in large part, due to the existence of historical hydro-geological information produced by the USGS.

The committee recommends that the USGS expand its efforts to produce hy-drogeological information to support state and local ground and surface water protection programs.

GROUND WATER QUALITY STANDARDS

Statewide standards for ambient ground water quality are intended to establish upper limits of concentration of designated pollutants in ground water consistent with the use of those waters for beneficial uses. The states that the committee investigated have all discovered evidence of contamination of ground water by synthetic organic chemical compounds in recent years. A significant issue that they face is what ambient standard for individual organic contaminants they should set to protect ground water for beneficial uses that might include drinking water, irrigation, and ecological protection. The task of developing those standards is complex. State and local governments do not generally have the ability or resources to develop scientifically based standards. For this reason, most states have looked to EPA to perform this function or to provide technical information that the states can use in setting ambient standards for these pollutants. In turn, the states can use ambient standards as one basis for regulatory and enforcement action to limit discharges of those pollutants from point and nonpoint sources into ground water.

Under the federal Safe Drinking Water Act (SDWA) of 1974, EPA is supposed to prepare and promulgate regulations or standards for constituents of health concern in public water supplies. The SDWA calls on EPA to set two different kinds of standards for water used for human consumption: recommended maximum contaminant levels (RMCLs) and maximum contaminant levels (MCLs). The RMCLs represent maximum concentrations of pollutants based solely on health concerns. Under the SDWA, EPA may not enforce these limits, they are primarily informational and represent long-term goals. By contrast, the MCLs are enforceable. If a public water supply exceeds a MCL for a pollutant, the purveyor is required to take action to reduce concentrations of that pollutant below the MCL. In late 1984, EPA proposed RMCLs and MCLs for many additional organic and